

compromise that melds the priorities of Democrats and Republicans in a way that will allow all Americans to prosper.

At the heart of this balanced budget is a historic investment in education—the most significant increase in education funding in 30 years. It includes \$40 billion in tax relief to help make a college education a reality for millions of Americans. It includes the largest increase in Pell grant scholarships in three decades and will give communities substantial tax cuts to help build and modernize our schools.

Second, this budget agreement extends health insurance coverage to 5 million children by investing \$24 billion in quality medical care. One of our greatest challenges, in this era of budget cutting, is to ensure that we continue to invest in our children and their future and this is a major step toward that goal. At the same time, this agreement honors our commitment to our parents by preserving the Medicare trust fund for a decade and implementing new market-oriented reforms.

This agreement bolsters environmental enforcement by doubling the pace of Superfund cleanups and delivers tax cuts to clean up and revitalize urban areas. It protects the community oriented policing services [COPS] initiative, which will put 100,000 more police officers on the street by 2000. And, it improves upon the welfare reform legislation that enacted last year by protecting our most vulnerable people. While providing \$3 million to move willing and motivated Americans from welfare to private sector jobs, the agreement treats 350,000 legal immigrants fairly by restoring their disability and health benefits.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, for the first time in a generation, this agreement provides mainstream, middle-class tax relief while spelling out specific, sufficient spending and entitlement reductions to pay for it and balance the budget at the same time. The final budget deal provides the \$500 child tax credit to the Americans most in need: 27 million middle- and low-income, hard-working families; 13 million children from families with incomes below \$30,000 will receive the child tax credit, nearly 7.5 million more than the Republican plan would have covered.

Democrats have succeeded in providing tax relief which invests in our children by helping middle-class parents trying to pay for their children's college tuition. The budget plan includes the President's \$1,500 HOPE scholarship to make the first 2 years of college universally available. And, it provides for a 20-percent tuition tax credit for college juniors, seniors, and graduate students, and for working Americans trying to upgrade their skills.

I am also pleased to see that the estate tax provisions resemble the President's proposal and legislation which I introduced earlier this year which seeks to provide relief, immediately, to those most in need: small businesses and family farms.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement continues the job started in 1993. It balances the budget by 2002 and puts the budget in surplus at least through 2007. The job is not done, Mr. Speaker. We must never allow ourselves to revert back to the irresponsible policies of Regonomics which today still confront our generation and generations to come in the form of a \$5½ trillion national debt. We must ensure that we follow through with the spending cuts outlined in this agreement while not allowing ourselves to succumb to future pres-

ures to borrow from future generations to pay for what we buy today. And, we must vigorously ensure that the budget deficit goals included in this agreement are enforced and reached.

Mr. Speaker, as we applaud the bipartisan budget plan which we will enact today, let us not forget the 1980's and the fiscal instability which strangled our Nation when President Clinton inherited exploding budget deficits in 1993. A decade of large deficits had weakened the foundation of our economy and challenged our Nation's power and prosperity abroad. In the President's first term he set out to cut the deficit in half. Working with the President, Democrats in Congress enacted the 1993 budget plan which has far exceeded our expectations. The President, who had the courage and vision to reverse this trend, deserves our thanks and praise.

When the President was reelected last year, he was determined to fulfill his goal of balancing the budget, but was unrelenting in his commitment to invest in our Nation's core values of education, health care, and the environment. This bipartisan budget agreement protects our priorities, solidifies the Nation's economic foundation, and bolsters America's position as the greatest economy in the world.

Policymaking is a series of tradeoffs and tough decisions. This bill unfairly targets Federal employees by asking them to pay additional retirement contributions without any increase in benefits. Nevertheless, on balance, this is a good budget and will have a positive effect on the lives of millions of Americans as we head into the next century. It reflects the values and priorities of our Nation and with the enactment of this agreement, our Nation will have taken a historic step toward a vibrant and prosperous 21st century.

AMERICA'S CULTURE

HON. HELEN CHENOWETH

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, part of America's culture and heritage is due to the wise-use of its rivers and waterways. In the arid West, America has literally turned deserts into gardens. We barge our agricultural and manufactured products in an economically and environmentally benign manner for trade. We live, work and recreate in our rivers. Indeed, our rivers are the lifeblood of much America.

I would like to bring to the attention of the Members an editorial by Bill Hall which appeared in the July 27, 1997 edition of the Lewiston Tribune. Mr. Hall articulates the concerns many of my constituents have about the plan of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine and Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service to breach the dams along the Snake and Columbia Rivers. These dams provide for the transportation, electricity generation, irrigation and recreation that many in the Pacific Northwest rely upon. Before these agencies take such drastic action, I ask the Members to consider Bill Hall's article.

B.H.—LEWISTON SHOULD SHARE THE MOTEL JOBS WITH BOISE
(By Bill Hall)

The Idaho Statesman of Boise has a point when it suggests that breaching the dams

that created the ports at Lewiston and Clarkston could be offset by the return of a fish run so robust it could really kick the economy into gear through boosts in the tourist, fishing and boating industries.

Indeed, the same is true of dams throughout Idaho and of the effect their rupture or removal could have on the economy of nearby communities.

Lucky Peak Dam above Boise, for instance. That plugs what was once a wild and natural stream and could become the same again. Imagine what that could do for the Boise Valley economy once recreation-starved Californians discovered that you could fly into Boise Airport and, in less than an hour, be enjoying some of the finest bait fishing in America.

And among the richest salmon spawning streams in Idaho were the Boise, the Payette, the Weiser and the Owyhee rivers. The state, by removing dams, could have that resource back and reap the profits of what plentiful fish would do for the tourist industry of western Idaho.

For that matter, what would it do to the economy of both northern and southwestern Idaho if the three Idaho Power dams in Hells Canyon could be removed altogether creating one stupendous canyon instead of these dam-locked segments we now have, these pitiful canyonettes?

The Statesman may be on to something of general use when it outlines the concept as it applies to Lewiston specifically: "A more natural river would give Lewiston the higher quality of life it needs to attract new clean industry."

If that is true of Lewiston, it is also true of American Falls Dam near Pocatello. That dam now produces power to sustain polluting Pocatello factories. If you get rid of the factories, you won't need the dam. That would give Pocatello a chance at a new, clean more vigorous tourist industry.

And what would Idaho need of industrial jobs if the demand became heavy enough for motel maids and bait shop clerks?

Indeed, the great Idaho desert with its purple sage, its golden grasses, its delicate desert flowers and its natural populations of coyote and rabbit and grasshopper is an easy sell to a nation hungry for the original, natural places. It may have seemed at the time to be a wise idea to let Micron Technology encroach on the nearby edge of the noble desert just for a few jobs in a dangerously volatile computer chip industry. But on reflection, imagine how much kinder it would be toward the environment to close that drab factory and its few thousand jobs and reach instead for the greater wealth of helping tourists revel in the desert sights, reaping the rewards of a new clean industry.

If the state would only have the foresight and the courage to eliminate all these alleged improvements and revert to a confident investment in its natural wonders, we could lavish on all of Idaho the economic improvements that the Statesman now so generously recommends for Lewiston alone.

HONORING HOSPICE OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it gives my colleagues, Mr. WOLF and Mr. MORAN, and me great pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to Hospice of Northern Virginia. Nineteen ninety-seven marks the 20th anniversary of this